Claims

Sub A3

1 A method of storage of electronic documents characterised in that said method includes the steps of the compilation of a list of possible storage locations for the documents within a document storage system, assessing each location and allocating a weighting value to each location with respect to other locations and in relation to specified attributes of each of the locations and, upon receipt of an electronic document, assessing at least one attribute of the document and, with reference to the attributes and weighted values of the selectable locations for storage, selecting to locate said electronic document in at least one of the storage locations.

2 A method according to claim 1 characterised in that for each incoming document, a correlation is made against a database representative of the filing properties of the storage location of the filing system which is being used to store the document.

3 A method according to claim 1 characterised in that a certain number of the storage locations with the strongest correlation values are presented for selection upon receipt of a document.

4 A method according to claim 3 characterised in that if a correlation is matched for an incoming document, that document is stored in the matching storage location automatically.

5 A method according to claim 3 characterised in that if, upon analysis of an incoming document, a matching correlation is not identified such that none of the presented storage locations are relevant, the incoming document is stored in a storage location using a conventional method of document filing.

6 A method according to claim 1 characterised in that as new documents are added into the filing system, the database of filing properties used for the correlation and analysis of storage locations is adapted to reflect the characteristics of the documents received.

7 A method according to claim 1 characterised in that the method used is adaptive to reflect the characteristics of received documents.

8 A method according to claim 7 characterised in that the storage location assessment occurs upon receipt of each new document.

9 A method according to claim 7 characterised in that the storage location assessment occurs at regular time intervals.

10 A method according to claim 1 characterised in that the attributes of the storage locations which are assessed are predefined by the system and/or the user.

11. A method according to claim 10 characterised in that statistical significance values are assigned to the selected attributes.

12 A method according to claim 1 characterised in that a companion database associated with the storage structure is provided, said database including statistically differentiating key words associated with particular storage locations and only these keywords are used in the correlation of the attributes of the incoming document and the available storage locations.

13 A method according to claim 12 characterised in that the correlation and selection of the storage location for the

incoming document is made with respect to the information for the storage locations in the companion database rather than the actual contents of the documents stored in the storage locations.

14 A method according to claim1 characterised in that the electronic documents received are e-mails.

15 An e-mail reception and storage system, said system comprising a series of storage locations, each provided to receive selected e-mails and characterised in that the selection of a particular storage location for a received e-mail is made by assessing each location and allocating a weighting value to each location with respect to other locations and in relation to specified attributes of each of the locations and, upon receipt of the e-mail, assessing at least one attribute of the e-mail and, with reference to the weighted values of the storage locations for storage, selecting to locate said e-mail in at least one of the storage locations.

16 A system according to claim 15 characterised in that the received e-mail can be selected to be stored in more than one storage location.

17 A system according to claim 15 characterised in that the weighting values and/or attributes are reviewed and if necessary revised as new e-mails are received and stored.

18 A system according to claim 15 characterised in that the attributes and weighting values are stored in a companion database with which the attributes of the received e-mail is compared rather than the actual content of each of the storage locations.